Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 KIGALI 00123 250746Z
ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-02 ISO-00 EUR-12 SS-15 SP-02 HA-05 INR-07
IO-13 NSC-05 CIAE-00 /070 W
----------129951 250901Z /13 S
R 241311Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY KIGALI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5688
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBTSSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

C O N F I D E N T I A KIGALI 0123

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, SHUM, OGEN,RW, UG
SUBJECT: TRAVEL TO UGANDA BY USG EMPLOYEE RE FATE OF MARK ELIAS

REF: (A) STATE 09460 (B) STATE 10089 (C) KIGALI 0043

1. MS WITT WISHES TO EXPRESS HER DEEP APPRECIATION FOR DEPT'S COMPASSION AND EFFORTS MADE ON BEHALF OF MARK ELIAAS. BETWEEN RECEIPT OF TEFTELS A AND B, MS WITT PROCEEDED TO WRITE FOLLOWING PERSONAL TELEGRAPHIC MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT AMIN.
QUOTE: PRESIDENT FIELD MARSLAL IDI AMIN DADA, REPUBLIC OF UGANDA, I RESPECTFULLY APPEAL TO YOU TO OBTAIN THE RELEASE OF MY FIANCE MARK ELIAS WHO DISAPPEARED FROM CAPETOWN VILLAS KAMPALA ON 13 MAY 1977. RUMORS SAY MY FIANCE WAS ARRESTED ON SUSPICION OF SPYING FOR THE CIA. SUCH SUSPICION MUST BE BASED ON THE FACT THAT HE FREQUENTLY TELEPHONED ME, AN AMERICAN FOREIGN SERVICE EMPLOYEE AT AMERICAN EMBASSY, KIGALI, RWANDA, MR. PRESIDENT, THESE CHARGES ARE A GRAVE ERROR, AS ALL CONVERSATIONS PERTAINED TO MY PLANS TO JOIN MARK ELIAS ON 30 MAY 1977 IN KAMPALA. ARRANGEMENTS HAD ALREADY BEEN MADE WITH THE MINISTER OF COMMERCE CAPT MOHAMED, NOAH AND MINISTER OF INTERNAL AFFAIRS GEN MUSTAFA, ADRISI. ALL INQUIRIES TO THE UGANDAN GOVERNMENT CONCERNING MY FIANCE HAVE BEEN IGNORED. I
CONFIDENTIAL

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PAGE 02 KIGALI 00123 250746Z

APPEAL TO YOU DIRECTLY MR. PRESIDENT, TO RELEASE MY FIANCE FOR HUMANITARIAN REASONS, YOU ARE MY LAST HOPE. I BELIEVE YOU WILL NOT IGNORE MY PLEA. GLORIA WITT. AMERICAN EMBASSY KIGALI. COPIES OF THIS CABLE HAVE BEEN SENT TO: HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION (GENEVA). UPI, AMERICAN AMBASSADOR UNITED NATIONS ANDREW YOUNG, SECRETARY-GENERAL UNITED NATIONS DR. WALDHEIM, EDITOR NEW YORK TIMES, AND EDITOR WASHINGTON POST. UNQUOTE.

Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

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2. ABOVE MESSAGE COULD NOT BE TRANSMITTED UNTIL JAN 14 DUE TO COMMUNICATIONS PROBLEMS AT PTT. AT NOON SATURDAY JAN 14, THE TELEX WAS RECEIVED AND ACKNOWLEDGED BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, KAMPALA, IT WAS NOT POSSIBLE TO GET TELEX NUMBER FROM UGANDAN EMBASSY. MS WITT HAD LENGTHY DISCUSSION WITH SECOND SECRETARY DIMBA OF UGANDAN EMBASSY, KIGALI, ON FRI, EXPLAINING IN DETAIL WHAT ACTION SHE WAS TAKING. HE PROMISED TO PHONE HER BY 1000 THE NEXT MORNING GIVING HER THE NUMBER. THE CONVERSATION ENDED WITH THE UNDERSTANDING THAT IF MS WITT DID NOT HEAR FROM MR DIMBA BY 1000 SAT A.M., SHE WOULD EELEX THE MESSAGE TO THE MIN OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOR WHICH SHE ALREADY HAD THE TELEX NUMBER. BY 1030 MR DIMBA HAD NOT PHONED MS WITT AND SHE PROCEEDED AS STATED.)

3. IN ADDITION TO MESSAGE TO AMIN, MS WITT WROTE A DETAILED LETTER CONTINING INOF RE HER FIANCE AND SUCCESSION OF EVENTS SUBSEQUENT TO HIS DISAPPEARANCE. COPIES OF THIS LETTER ALONG WITH A COPY OF THE CABLE TO AMIN WERE SENT TO ALL THOSE LISTED IN TELEX TO AMIN.

4. NAIROBI DAILY NATION OF THURSDAY, JAN 19, CARRIED 4-COLUMN ARTICLE ON BACK PAGE BASED ON WITT MESSAGE TO AMIN AND COVERING LETTER: HEADLINE: "WOMAN PLEADS WITH AMIN."

5. MS WITT HAS NOT THUS FAR RECEIVED ANY RESPONSE FROM KAMPALA. THE LAST INFORMATION SHE RECEIVED (PRIOR TO SENDING OF TELEX) WAS THAT MR. ELIAS WILL APPEAR IN COURT IN KAMPALA ON FEB 7. WOULD
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 KIGALI 00123 250746Z

APPRECIATE DEPT PASS THIS INFO TO GERMAN EMBASSY KAMPALA AND REQUEST THEY FOLLOW UP.

6. MS WITT INTENDS TO CONTINUE REPORTING DEVELOPMENTS, AS DEPT HAS REQUESTED, UNTIL DEPARTURE FROM KIGALI EARLY FEBRUARY. MS WITT HAS SUSPENDED EFFORTS TO ENTER UGANDA.
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Sheryl P. Walter Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 20 Mar 2014

Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Concepts: PRISONERS RELEASE, PUBLIC CORRESPONDENCE
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 24 jan 1978
Decaption Date: 01 jan 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 20 Mar 2014
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
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Errors: N/A
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20 Mar 2014
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